CONTINENTAL PAINTING AT PARIS IN 1878.
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Princeton Review (1878-1884); Jan-Jun 1879; American Periodicals
pg. 389

CONTINENTAL PAINTING AT PARIS IN 1878.

BREVITY may be the soul of wit, but it is death and destruction to art-criticism, which always requires leisure and space for the development of its theories, its descriptions, and its arguments. There are so many reserves to be made, so many explanations to be attempted, before any thing can be said with simple justice about the labors of artists, that the critic must have a fair opportunity for expressing himself deliberately, or else it would be much better for all parties concerned that he should quietly hold his peace. I have, therefore, determined to limit myself, in this review, to a consideration of Continental painting only, and even for this I shall require two articles. English and American art I speak of at the same time in another periodical, the *International Review*, which has the advantage of being easily accessible to the reader of these pages, who may thus complete with me his survey of the pictorial world, if so much talk about pictures does not weary him.

The exhibition of pictures at the *Champ de Mars* was of such vast extent that the most industrious student could do little more than make a selection, and of the selected pictures only a few would remain permanently in his memory. In round numbers, France alone sent a thousand pictures and drawings, Great Britain nearly five hundred, and other countries in proportion; so that in oil-paintings alone the exhibition contained close upon three thousand numbers, a large proportion of these being works of considerable size and importance, not to be understood or remembered without some expenditure of time. A critic who does his work seriously may perhaps select from

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such a gathering about one picture in twenty (the mere selection being in itself a great labor), and even then he will find it not a light task to learn by heart and carry away with him the details of a hundred and fifty compositions. When it comes to writing about them, the difficulty is to retain the reader's attention, for, when the picture itself would charm and delight, a printed paragraph about it may produce quite an opposite effect.

The world's productive power in the fine arts is already enormous, and it increases every year. Thousands and thousands of persons in England, France, and Germany live by the artistic professions; whilst in countries where art is younger, or where new schools are rising up on ground formerly occupied by older ones, as in Spain and Italy, the number of more or less successful painters may already be counted by hundreds. All these men are incessantly occupied in increasing the already prodigious art-stock of the civilized world, and where it is to end no human being can foretell. Commercial depression may reduce production by driving the less successful artists into other occupations, or by deterring young men from becoming painters or sculptors; but art is in itself so attractive a pursuit that those who are naturally gifted for it will work under the most discouraging conditions.

The painter of whom I shall speak first has never from the beginning of his career had to struggle against discouragement of any kind. From his earliest manhood Meissonier has been a successful artist, and during the last ten years his pieces have equalled those of the most celebrated old masters. I do not mean what the old masters got when they were alive—for that was often very meagre pay indeed—but what their works fetch in modern auction-rooms. The rapid fame of Meissonier is due both to his own ability and to the publicity which a first-rate modern artist gains through exhibitions and the press. The latest news of him circulated by the newspapers is that his picture "Cuirassiers—1807" has been sold for 300,000 francs. Such an excessive price for what is merely a concatenation of laborious studies is not a proof of any enlightened enthusiasm for art. The picture, though skilful, observant, and conscientious, is not a great work of art; it is simply a piece of very re-

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markable industry. There is character in the soldiers, and you feel as if you were on the field, and could look at them one by one : but the work gives no æsthetic pleasure ; it is not a poem ; it is a page of the most matter-of-fact history, like a chapter of Thiers. Considered as historical painting, it has a certain value ; such a work might reasonably be purchased by the nation, if the price were moderate, and placed in a public gallery ; but it can add little to the charms of a private collection. I should greatly prefer, if allowed to choose, such a picture as "The Philosopher," in which Meissonier was really animated by an artistic motive. The picture only contains a single figure—a philosopher sitting behind a table, perusing a sheet with an air of the most perfect abstraction. He has large folios before him (the learned men of old had a predilection for stately folios), and there are others on a chair by his side. We see at the first glance that the motive of the picture was a genuine artistic motive. Every accessory is painted with delight in its picturesque quality, and with supreme skill. The philosopher's study is a rich and interesting interior. The light from the window is so arranged, with closed shutters and open ones, as to fall most effectively, slanting down and catching the picturesque objects in a manner which would have gratified Rembrandt. Meissonier is not what we call a colorist ; but in this picture, and in that entitled "Dictating one's Memoirs," there is remarkable craft and skill in the use of fine reds, in such details, for example, as the red edges of a book, and he has heightened the carnations to make them hold their own with these surroundings. This painter's son, M. Charles Meissonier, who dutifully imitates his father in every thing, occasionally produces a red picture which is intended to be in the paternal manner. For example, "The Druggist of the Convent," a picture representing a monk in a laboratory, is an imitation of Meissonier's red pictures such as the two just mentioned. It is lighted with a slanting light from a window, exactly like "The Philosopher," and the wall is entirely red with its consequent strong reflections. The philosopher has books on a chair, and so has the doctor. Meissonier senior paints the beach at Antibes (Alpes Maritimes), so Meissonier junior paints "Morning on the Shore in the Neighborhood of Antibes," a very con-

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scientious study, which would, if it could, resemble the paternal work. Evidently Meissonier junior endeavors dutifully to obey the injunction :

"Follow thy father, good son,
And do as thy father has done."

With regard to the pictures of Antibes, the elder Meissonier's work is curious as a French attempt in the direction of the landscape-painting of fact as opposed to that of feeling, which the French artists have generally practised. It is a sort of photography in painting, really much truer than photography, all things considered. The view of the city and port is most careful in every detail of projection and cast shadows. The sea is also wonderfully true, with its play of blue and green, and its thoroughly studied ripples, and the sky is bright and pure in quality with its grayish blue space, and its filmy white clouds. There are three figures: Meissonier himself on a gray horse, his son on a bay, and a man on foot. All the details of sky, buildings, trees, road, sand, rippling water, and distant mountains are painted with as much care as the figures, and the result was highly interesting as an attempt to tell the real truth in art by a painter of the highest manual skill ; but it was more interesting than satisfactory. Only the keenest critics have any relish for veracity pushed to that degree ; uncritical visitors, when they come across such work, miss the mental impression which landscape-painting usually conveys. The view near Antibes by Meissonier junior is of precisely similar materials, except that he has some figures of women drying linen, and there is a general inferiority of workmanship, especially in the distant hills. I should be sorry to leave the impression that M. Charles Meissonier is a bad painter. He is not that, by any means ; his "Druggist" is a piece of good work, which might take rank with that of our English painter Marks, and his studies on the Mediterranean shore are as good as those of our matter-of-fact landscape-painters. He is an honest workman, whose misfortune it is to be continually suggesting comparisons with another workman of too transcendent skill. His father exhibited no less than sixteen pictures, including the portrait of a lady, and a picture of "A Venetian Painter" with his wife or mistress—the only two instances known to me of women

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painted by Meissonier. The lady in the first of these pictures has more charm than might have been expected. The well-known picture, "The Sergeant's Portrait," representing a group of soldiers in barracks, one of whom is attempting to draw the portrait of the sergeant whilst others are looking on, is an excellent study of character, but one marvels at the patience which could paint literally every brick in the background. When Millais did as much for a brick wall many years ago the French critics spoke of it as an English aberration, but when Meissonier descends to these details it is, I suppose, our duty to admire.

It is not quite certain that these great exhibitions are altogether an advantage for painters already celebrated. Meissonier came out of this one with an increase of official recompenses, but the general impression about him was not deepened. He could not possibly climb higher on his own ladder, and the danger of a fresh appeal to public admiration is that of producing weariness. Meissonier, too, already takes rank with the old Dutch masters, and need not descend from his pedestal to enter into the common arena. Rosa Bonheur, on her part, did not send a single picture; Holman Hunt also abstained entirely.

Gérôme, another painter whose reputation has nothing to gain and much to lose, exhibited several pictures, by far the most interesting and dramatic being "L'Eminence Grise." In any complete history of France, such as that of Henri Martin, for instance, you will find an account of this remarkable man, who though a simple Capuchin friar, in religion "Father Joseph," was at one time just as really and truly the Prime Minister of France as Richelieu was really the sovereign. He was Richelieu's second self, and he had the art of subordinating his own personality so completely to that of his master as to remain from first to last nothing but "A Friar of Orders Gray." In Gérôme's picture this *Eminence Grise*, the gray shadow of the Red Eminence, is quietly descending the grand staircase of Richelieu's palace, reading his breviary, and affecting not to perceive the numerous courtiers who salute him with abject deference. It really is not possible to imagine how the subject could have been more skilfully treated. The dramatic conception of the scene is simply complete. The *père Joseph*

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is perfect in his self-effacement, and entirely succeeds in playing his chosen part of absolute modesty and unconsciousness of power. The courtiers, sure that they are all and each observed by those eyes which seem to be riveted on the pages of the breviary, hope that their low obeisances, though unacknowledged, will not be made in vain. The execution is so perfect that we become spectators, less of a picture than of the actual scene, for the painter has employed his skill to make us forget his skill. I do not know a more thorough piece of quiet technical performance; every thing is well done, from the faces and costumes down to the elaborate stair-rail and the stairs themselves, with the gleam of light that slants across them. A picture by Gérôme which attracted great attention as a curiosity was "The Lion." It represented the king of beasts reposing in his den and looking out from its obscurity to the light. His eyes glare with a brilliant green such as the reader may have observed in the eyes of a cat when the animal is in rather a dark place; but I suspect that Gérôme's green is too blue, though he probably observed it in the eyes of the lion itself. It is wonderful how easily people are put out of their reckoning by seeing something painted which has not been painted before. All who looked at this picture when, on different occasions, I happened to be near it, were quite taken aback by the lion's green eyes, and criticised them as impossible, never in any instance perceiving that the artist had not intended to represent the eye of the lion as it is seen in full light, but that he had purposely given its green reflection, which in all the felines is brighter than any emerald. From the technical point of view, the experiment is highly interesting. I never saw any green, in painting, so phosphorescent. The gleam of those eyes is not simply light, but fire. One great reason for this is the vast space of darkness with which these little lamps are surrounded, and it exemplifies the old rule that the light will appear the brightest which is surrounded by the greatest quantity of shade. The animal is thoroughly studied and drawn with that entire independence of other people's notions about form which has always characterized the artist.[1] Another study of an animal

[1] Gérôme is never afraid of comparative flatness and straightness in drawing animals, when another artist would generally put bulging muscles. The hind leg

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of equal merit is that of the dead horse in *L'Arabe et son Cheval.* The scene is in the arid desert, not a flat desert, for there are steep red sandy hills and a line of cliffs with sand flowing over them like cascades. The strongly defined shadows of these convey the idea of the intensest possible sunshine. The horse is down on his flank, and his Arab master is examining him with a faint hope that life may not be quite extinct. The animal is painted with the greatest possible knowledge and the most accomplished manual skill, though the shine of the coat may be a little overdone, like the coats of race-horses in sporting pictures. The picture would be a simple study, were it not that the awe of the desert scene elevates it to a higher sphere. The surrounding desolation impresses us with a vague terror, and makes us wonder what will become of the rider who is left unaided in such a fearful region. The color is better than Gérôme's coloring usually is, being sufficiently harmonious in warm hues. Another picture of his, "Women in the Harem Bath," is what Mr. Whistler might call an "arrangement in blue and brown" —blue *faiences*, blue dress of woman leaning on pillar, blue reflections in water, with brown in the background, and rather too much of it in the flesh. The nude figure ought to be reserved for painters who have the gift of color. I speak of color without pretension to authority, for nobody can prove that color is good or bad, but it is impossible to leave it altogether out of the question in considering the qualities of pictures. Being dissatisfied with the flesh-color of several very celebrated painters, I went about seeking for something to please me better, and at last found a "Galatea", by P. Parrot, a nude figure which seemed to be well colored, but the same artist had a large "Judgment of Paris," which seemed so much inferior to the "Galatea" that I could not at first believe the two to be from the same hand. The explanation was in the accessories by which the figures were surrounded. They were probably painted with exactly the same palette, but the "Galatea" had the advantage of a dark crimson background and a black frame,[1]

of this lion is a case in point. It is really much more powerful than the ordinary notion about a lion's limbs, but it is not so thick or rounded.

[1] Black frames are not often advantageous to a picture, but the black of the frame was very helpful in this instance.

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whereas the goddesses in "The Judgment of Paris" were in the open air, "under the greenwood tree," with a dark-blue sky above, and their flesh-color did not contend successfully against these surroundings. However this may be, I came to the conclusion that if a painter draws well, handles his brush cleverly (this is most important), and has some knowledge of light and shade, with a knack of choosing interesting subjects, he may color as badly as he pleases, and still attain celebrity. Nay more, it might be argued that the absence of the color faculty is a positive advantage to a painter in some respects, for the born colorists often offend by the strength of their coloring (which results from the intensity of their own sensations), when those who have no passion for color avoid giving offence, and shelter themselves in that dull mud which satisfies the French public so completely.[1] M. Jean Paul Laurens would probably have been a less successful painter if he had been a colorist. I never saw any flesh-color of his which had the qualities of carnation; but he paints away most productively without troubling himself about such a small matter, and has won a splendid position by his intellectual conception of his subjects. He sent no less than fourteen pictures to the Paris Exhibition, most of them important, and all serious, even when not positively lugubrious. Jean Paul Laurens has a passion for introducing a dead body into his compositions, which does not by any means tend to increase their gayety. The origin of this tendency was a terrible impression received in boyhood when his master, an Italian painter, compelled him to hold up a taper to light a dead woman in an inn, whilst he studied the effect of the cast shadows by which the horror of the corpse was infinitely increased. At length the lad imagined that it moved, and let the taper fall.[2] There is a corpse in the picture of

[1] So far as I have been able to discover, it does not appear that any picture is ever refused either at the English Academy or the French Salon, for badness of color in itself, if the work has other qualities; whereas I believe many of the pictures are refused for bad drawing and unworkmanlike composition. A very common cause of refusal is insufficient manual dexterity.

[2] This story has been told recently with great literary effect in an interesting biography of J. P. Laurens by Ferdinand Fabre, entitled "Le Roman d'un Peintre." It is quoted in "L'Art," vol. xvi., p. 25.

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" Pope Formosus and Stephen VII.," another in " The Interdict," another in " Francis Borgia before the coffin of Isabella of Portugal," another in " The Austrian Staff before the Body of Marceau ;" whilst the two last subjects on the painter's list are " The Funeral of William the Conqueror " and " The Death of the Duke of Enghien." A pleasant lot of subjects, are they not? Besides these the painter exhibited a portrait of himself, which only increased, by the extreme seriousness of its aspect, the impression left by his pictures. Frenchmen talk about " l'art sérieux :" the art of J. P. Laurens is " de l'art sérieux" with a vengeance! I wonder if his cadaverous face ever brightened into a smile; I wonder if he ever, for an hour together, got quite rid of the presence of death! But though his ideas run habitually on corpses and coffins, he does not paint so as to inspire either horror or disgust. A feeling of respectful awe is what he both experiences and inspires. We have that feeling before the body of the brave and noble-hearted Marceau; we have it before the dead queen as we see her in her opened coffin. The painter looks upon death calmly, and leads us into its presence with a becoming gravity, quietly reminding all of us that " to this complexion we must come at last."

It is a cheerful change to pass from these pictures to the pleasant comedy of M. Vibert. One word, again, about color in this place. M. Vibert colors brightly enough, and so far delivers himself from French mud; yet it is not a desirable kind of brightness. Here, again, let me disclaim all intention of speaking with dogmatic authority. For any thing that I can prove to the contrary, M. Vibert may be as fine a colorist as Correggio. I can but tell the reader how the matter seems to me. It seems, then, as if M. Vibert's taste for bright colors—for such things, I mean, as a pair of yellow-satin breeches—were unlucky with regard to the artistic quality of his pictures, though it may add to their liveliness and popularity. Bright colors are not by any means objectionble in themselves, but they ought to form part of a harmony, like the blare of a trumpet in a piece of concerted music; and it seems to me that in M. Vibert's pictures the colors are dangerously independent.

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His comic wit is delightful. Take, for example, the picture of "The Serenade," where a young gentleman is singing of love, and his servant, hidden from the lady, but very visible to us, is sitting with the guitar-case on his knee and observing the amorous youth with the most absolute non-sympathy, and a quiet wonder how young gentlemen can be so silly. There is character in every figure by Vibert. He has interpreted Lafontaine's fable, "La Cigale et la Fourmi," by means of a poor, thin, and thinly-clad young singer shivering in the snowy weather with his guitar dangling at his back, and a portly monk bringing Christmas fare home to the monastery. The monk, representing the ant, says to the cicada :

"Vous chantiez, j'en suis fort aise.
Eh bien ! dansez maintenant."

The expression on the face of the fat, comfortable person of disdain for the poor, uncomfortable being who has wasted his time in an idle trade, is excellent; but when we reflect a little the monk seems badly chosen, from the literary point of view. He does well in the picture; but fat monks have not generally been considered so much ants living by their own industry, as drones living on the industry and simplicity of others. The fable itself will not bear searching criticism. The agreeable arts are not always unproductive, nor does industry always make people ultimately comfortable. Public singers often retire with a competency, and the best working bees of Lancashire and Yorkshire have often but little honey in times of commercial depression.

The system of governmental recompenses for painters has many inconveniences, the chief of which is the slur which is cast upon a good artist of long standing by a third-class medal. There is Vetter, for instance, who got a third-class medal in 1867, as the catalogue informs us (when already past fifty); and I may mention with much regret that M. Flameng, the great etcher, has been insulted with a third-class medal this very year. I need hardly observe that to offer a third-class medal to a man is equivalent to telling him that he is a third-

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class artist. A very young man may accept such a dubious honor as a step to better things, but an artist of mature age and accomplished skill is not likely to be thankful for it. Such a compliment is a positive injury to so accomplished a painter as Vetter. His picture of "Mazarin," which belongs to the nation, is a beautifully painted interior, as highly finished as a Gérôme, with better coloring, and the pathetic interest of the subject touches all humanity. The cardinal is seated in his splendid room, "exhausted by fever," and attended by his secretary and domestics. He is too unwell to go into his picture-gallery, but the love of art is still ardent within him, and he has his pictures brought to him one by one that he may see them again, regretfully, and probably for the last time. We need not be lovers of art to sympathize with Mazarin in his regret at leaving the things which had been dear to him in this life, for however firmly a man may believe in an existence beyond the grave, and however confidently he may count upon its superiority to human life on earth, there is always some thing in the earthly life which cannot be quitted without sadness. Mazarin may have thought that the fine arts were a flower of the earthly life and not of the heavenly; that here were just some of those purely human things which are possible only in an imperfect state of existence, and which constitute one of its strongest charms. It is like the farewell visit of David Cox to the room where his water-colors were hanging, when he felt that the hand of death was on him, and said, "Dear pictures, I shall never see you more!" It is like Scott in his last days when they wheeled him about the rooms at Abbotsford, and he looked at his armor and the bindings of his books, and said, "Give me one turn more!" The perfect care bestowed upon the workmanship in minor matters has not prevented the painter from succeeding with his main pathetic purpose, but to my feeling this exquisite painting of interiors is somewhat of an interference when the mental conception of the picture is, as in this instance, of an elevated character. The exquisite finish of a polished floor, a chimney-piece, a gilded balustrade, and hangings of needlework and scarlet, becomes obtrusive when we are considering so grave a matter as the sad

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close of a human existence.[1] I thought "The Flight into Egypt," by the same artist, a more perfect picture in this sense, that its unity was more complete and the artistic conception more concentrated. The subject is so hackneyed, that we wonder how a painter dare venture upon it; but M. Vetter gave it a new interest. The travellers are already in the desert, under a quiet evening sky, greenish towards the zenith, yellower at the horizon. The only natural things in the sky are the thin crescent moon and two or three reddish clouds, but there is a great pale angel, who protects the wanderers as they slowly cross the brown expanse of plain. Far on the horizon are faint blue and purple hills, and these are all the surroundings of the simple homely group with the ass, travelling as the poor travel, with little speed and few comforts, the best they have being patience. It is not an elaborate picture, as we see, but it engraved itself on my memory at once like a simple old melody "that's sweetly played in tune."

It is the fashion amongst critical and artistic circles of rather high pretension to sneer at Toulmouche as a manufacturer of pictures for *boudoirs*. Well, no doubt he works for the market; but many painters do that and escape censure, and Toulmouche has the merit of an entire absence of false pretension. He does not set himself up as a profound thinker, he teaches no moral lessons; all that he pretends to do is to paint French ladies in idle moments, surrounded by pretty things: and he does this carefully and well. In the exhibition of 1878, he was fairly represented by a sort of Allegro and Penseroso pair of pictures. The first was called "Le Miroir," and represented a very pleasant-looking pretty girl in blue, with her hand on her lip, laughing at the prettiness of her own face, which she sees in a hand-mirror. Her costume is as charming as it can be; but alas for me that my ignorance of the fashions makes me incompetent to describe it! She has a little dark-blue jacket—that I know, and an embroidered chemisette, a gold belt and trimmings, and a pale-blue skirt. The interior of

[1] The painter might answer here that he had carefully finished all the beautiful things with which Mazarin was surrounded, in order to enhance the spectator's sympathy with his regret at leaving them.

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the room is as carefully painted, and the furniture as well chosen, as the details of the costume. I have not space to describe them, but may mention a Chinese screen and a vase of flowers painted with perfect skill. The other picture represents a lady with a pretty but somewhat melancholy face sitting by her fireside. It has the same qualities as the other, except that it is not so gay. She wears a morning-gown of rose-colored satin, and is seated in a gilded arm-chair, in a prettily decorated room with a blue ground. The title is "By the Fireside," and I presume the lady is a little sad because her husband has left her to herself. The intellectual motive, as we see, is next to nothing in these pictures; but it is sufficient for a work of art. The artistic motive is simply the setting of a pretty figure amidst agreeable and appropriate surroundings, painted with the utmost possible skill. I have nothing to say against these pictures. They are trifles, but elegant trifles, quite blameless on the grounds of morality and good taste, and much more fit to hang in a pretty modern room than the drunken Dutch boors and leering vulgar women which so many learned connoisseurs admire.

The important set of pictures exhibited by M. Bougereau reminds me of another form of contemporary prejudice. Some critics and many artists profess an aversion for this painter, because his work has not the qualities of rougher and more passionate art, and because he has been so successful in winning the admiration of multitudes who do not know very much about the fine arts. In answer to this let me observe that an artist ought never to be blamed because he is not some other kind of man; the only question which concerns the critic being whether the painter is, or is not, good in his own kind; and again that true criticism ought to place itself resolutely above the jealousies of artists. Toulmouche and Bougereau are highly popular painters; consequently they are detested by all less successful men who happen to be naturally of a jealous disposition. Criticism itself may feel a certain jealousy when the *profanum vulgus* takes reputations into its own hands and makes men famous without listening to the learned few; and men so popular as these two are really quite independent of criticism,

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which can neither put them down nor add any thing appreciable to their fame. The objection, and the only objection, which I should make to Bougereau is that he idealizes certain subjects, especially rustic subjects, till they reach in his hands a degree of refinement which is too much beyond the truth; but this very same tendency becomes of the highest use when he has to deal with subjects which cannot possibly be refined upon too much. I should say, for example, that Bougereau has not sufficient strength of realism for subjects frankly taken from the actual world, but that when reality is not wanted his idealism may be very valuable. I cannot imagine a better painter for Roman Catholic chapels and churches. The worshipper does not want to see the Holy Virgin as the carpenter's wife at Nazareth: he wants to be helped so that his imagination may realize what, to him, is more than half-divine—woman, indeed, in form, but raised far above earthly humanity by heavenly grace and favor. Bougereau's Virgins in "La Vierge, l'Enfant Jésus, et Saint Jean-Baptiste," and in the "Vierge Consolatrice," are, I should suppose, exactly what a modern Roman Catholic would feel to be most in unison with his thought. A *Pieta* by the same painter is in the same class of ideas, and so is "La Charité." In all these pictures a graceful and highly refined conception is sustained by execution which is absolute perfection in its own kind, beautiful drawing and beautiful painting together, to which, in background decorations of stone and marble, the artist adds the severer taste of an architect.

It would be easy to write volumes on the French school alone, which is so able in performance and so rich in the number of its artists. Some idea of the numerical force of the school may be gathered from the annual salons. Four thousand pictures are offered every year, and as the same artist cannot exhibit more than two works it follows that there are at least two thousand painters in France who consider themselves qualified to exhibit.[1] The number of pictures actually hung amounted in one year to 2900, so that there must be 1450 men and women who paint well enough to pass for professional

[1] If we include a few foreigners who send pictures annually to the Salon.

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artists. Some of these are able amateurs, but they are just as much competitors for fame and honor as those who work for bread. It is not possible to do justice to such a prolific school within the limits of an article. The following notices, like what has gone before, are a mere selection of specimens like branches gathered in a forest.

M. Hector Leroux is a classical painter and archæologist, but he has not the strong and solid reality of Mr. Alma Tadema, nor does he seem to desire it. His world is a pale world, in which we see the ancient Greeks; revived for us indeed, but rather as interesting and somewhat melancholy ghosts than as creatures of flesh and blood. This effect is much increased by an intentionally pale and *terne* manner of painting, which harmonizes admirably with some subjects, but not with all. One of the pictures by this artist, in which I should say that subject and technical methods agree very well together, is "The Danaides," in which the forty-nine daughters of King Danaus, who had murdered their husbands, are represented, at their endless task, pale and wearied, bearing their heavy amphoræ and pouring the ever-insufficient water. G. Moreau, a painter who became celebrated some years ago by his fantastic interpretations of ancient subjects and a curious manual skill, had six pictures in the exhibition of 1878. I have not space to speak separately of these, but the artist's singular method of painting deserves a word of comment. How shall I describe it? His pictures are not exactly like jewellery, because the colors of precious stones do not melt so much into each other as M. Moreau's colors do; but the general effect of his painting is something between jewellery and feathers. Of his six pictures, "Hercules and the Lernæan Hydra," "Salome," and "Le Sphinx deviné" were the most characteristic, and in all of them the artist's technical peculiarities were fully exhibited. I do not much appreciate these coruscations, which have little or nothing to do with nature on the one hand or with serious artistic purposes on the other; but I think that in the first conception and arrangement of his pictures M. Moreau shows real originality, and it seems evident that he has the gift of invention. He is certainly himself, and is like no other artist in the world.

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Jules Breton's reputation was certainly increased by the universal exhibition of 1878, to which he sent nine works. Some of these were very well known already, but one of the most interesting, "La Sieste," had not before been publicly exhibited. It represented some peasant girls and young men taking their noonday rest on the ground under the shadow of some trees or bushes, and showed great power of composition and drawing, and most skilful management of light and shade, which played upon the figures in that accidental way which offers so many difficulties, besides which the figures were not by any means in easy positions. If the color had been equal to its other qualities this picture would have been a very perfect work; but unluckily, like most French artists, Breton is cold and chilly in his grass. There was a fine oil sketch of his, representing peasant women dancing round a bonfire at the "Saint Jean," the sketch of the picture exhibited in 1875.

Several painters who have died recently were represented in the French as Landseer was in the English section. Amongst these I may mention Corot, Courbet, and Chintreuil. There were ten pictures by Corot which held well together (they were exhibited on a screen), and rather increased one's sense of the master's qualities, which were chiefly a dreamy charm and careful attention to tonic values. Like Turner, he became careless of form as he advanced in life; but he did not, like the English master, display any increasing preference for bright colors. Of all his pictures I think the one which pleased me most was "Les Plaisirs du Soir—danse antique." It is full of a vague sentiment, which carries us at once into the dreamland of poetry; the landscape is beautifully composed, and the figures, quite as well drawn as they could be to harmonize with their surroundings, are arranged with the greatest elegance.

Chintreuil, who was represented by two pictures, died in August, 1873. He was a most devoted student of nature, and led a life which, until success came to him in his last years, had been one of continual poverty and privation. This is one of those cases, unfortunately numerous in the fine arts, in which there is real suffering from poverty and hope deferred, yet neither the artist nor the public is to blame. Chintreuil

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worked incessantly and much out-of-doors, even to the injury of his health; he had the purest, simplest, and most honest spirit, but had not great artistic gifts; and the public who looked at his pictures was quite excusable for not buying them. The two in the Universal Exhibition, though selected as representative, show much more love for nature than knowledge of art. "L'Espace," for example, is nothing but a very wide prospect, crude in color, and with little composition. It was exhibited at Vienna, and won a medal for its author; but he died too soon to know of this recompense. The "Bosquet aux Chevreuils"[1] was less of a panorama and more of a picture.

The French Government no longer appears to bear ill-will against the destroyer of the Vendôme column, since a picture by Courbet was admitted into the Universal Exhibition. This picture, "La Vague," is simply one of those studies of waves and nothing else which have become rather frequent in modern art. It is fine, for Courbet's dashing manner is as well adapted to the expression of wave motion as the vigorous style of the living Dutchman, Mesdag. Poor Courbet, with all his follies and errors, and his prodigious opinion of himself, had a real power in art and a vigorous passion for nature, particularly for the sea, which bore some relationship to his own energetic and tumultuous character. Another dead artist, more largely represented, was Daubigny, of whom there were nine pictures. He is so well known that I need not dwell upon him here. He had a broad manner of painting, great simplicity of purpose, and an intense affection for nature; but he was a bad draughtsman and often a heavy colorist. His works have many defects, but they have generally the great merit of being harmonious both in conception and in style. Corot and he are generally named together, and both would be unsatisfactory to most Englishmen from their want of accurate observation, of which there is more in "Mount's Bay" by Brett, or in "Over the Hills and Far Away" by Millais, than in all Corot's and Daubigny's works put together; but they had high artistic aims, and knew perfectly well what they were about.

[1] An etching of this picture may be found on the first page of the illustrated catalogue of Chintreuil's works published by Cadart in 1874. The picture is numbered 316.

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I never knew a painter who adhered so faithfully to the same class of subject and the same arrangement of color as Mazure. He always paints rippling water, and almost always under such a sky that the ripples shall exhibit a play of cobalt blue in various degrees of intensity with dull browns and greens. The same contrast of color is carried out in his skies and shores. He has a preference for the shores of the Mediterranean, and his picture in the exhibition is from the "Rivage du Golfe Juan, Alpes Maritimes." His whole art as a colorist is to give value to certain blues by well-calculated oppositions, and by practice he has attained a degree of mastery over this arrangement, in which he stands quite alone. Few men can paint rippling water so well, and M. Mazure has a sufficient knowledge of material in shore scenery and boats to furnish the rest of his pictures satisfactorily; but the real subject of them is always the rippling surface of the sea itself, and especially the turquoise lights and sapphire transparencies. Before leaving the French section, I may mention two or three pictures of minor importance which amongst so many large canvases might easily be overlooked. De Tournemine, who I regret to say is now amongst the dead, was represented by one picture of the Nile, very quiet and harmonious throughout, painted apparently on a basis of monochrome in the old Dutch fashion, with light colorings (light, I mean, in substance), the play of blue over the brown being pleasant in the sky and water. The scene is in a part of the Nile where there is a range of low hills at a moderate distance from the river. Between them and the water is a line of brown land with palm-trees, and on the low ground close to the water we see a multitude of storks, as well as in the air and in the river itself. I have never seen the Nile, but am strongly convinced that Tournemine had felt its true poetry as a painter ought to find it in the landscape, and not simply in its antiquities. The humbler forms of French landscape-painting were fairly represented by C. Beauverie with his "Matin sur les Bords de l'Oise," and the Baron de Mortemart-Boisse with "Un Chemin Creux en Normandie." It is not always the most famous painters who become most truly intimate with the quiet scenes of nature. M. Beauverie's picture is a subject

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like thousands which you may find by the French rivers—a bit of sloping shore with poplars, a river flowing smoothly, and a light sky, such as you may see if you get up early in the morning when the dew is rising. The color here, though unpretending, was good, and there was a rich variety of greens in the foreground, neither crude nor sacrificed to gray and brown. M. de Mortemart's picture was also pleasantly colored, and clearer and brighter in effect. A peasant woman with a load on her back is walking down one of those narrow lanes which are common in some parts of France, and which are often hollowed between steep banks, as in the present instance. Shadows fall across it from trees broadly but well painted, and there is a cottage chimney beyond: not much of a subject, as you see; yet the picture held its place though surrounded by works of great fame and importance. I cannot leave the French school without at least mentioning Pelouse, an artist of very recent fame, who belongs to the genuine rustic school, and has evidently a very deep sylvan feeling, which he expresses roughly, but with unquestionable power. His "Coupe de Bois, à Senlisse" is one of the finest forest scenes I ever met with. The sun has just set behind the forest, and the sky is red with the afterglow. Against it is an intricacy of branches, drawn with a thorough knowledge of woody character. M. Pelouse is a direct descendant of Constable, through the Fontainebleau school; and though he may rather exaggerate at times the roughness of texture and surface in which the descendants of Constable have taken delight, those technical peculiarities are favorable to the treatment of forest subjects. A forest painted like a lady's boudoir would offend by the want of harmony between the subject and the execution.

The general characteristics of modern Italian painting are crudity of color (that is what first strikes you), an original and direct observation of nature quite independent of the old masters, and a certain playfulness which is occasionally childish. The Italian pictures were, as a whole, the least successful of all those in the Champ de Mars exhibited by European nations; but in spite of the generally unfavorable impression produced by them on the public mind, it appeared evident to indulgent

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judges that the school is only passing through a youthful phase which may be succeeded in course of time by a ripe and vigorous maturity. It may seem strange to speak of Italian art as being young, when we remember the great men of the sixteenth century; but modern painting in Italy is really one of the youngest forms of art in Europe. The Italians have begun to learn painting again, about the same time that they have been learning a new political system, and modern Italian art really belongs to the same epoch as Italian nationality and freedom. The painters are now in the phase of intense naturalism which is familiar to us in other schools, and it appears to be an inevitable law that such naturalism should always be accompanied by crudity of color. There are, however, different kinds of crudity, for although greens and pinks and certain purples have a special faculty for setting your teeth on edge, a painter can be crude even in browns and grays; yet the crudity of dulness is always less offensive than that of brilliance. Vertunni is crude in mud and therefore bearable, and he has some fine qualities of sentiment and force of representation. His picture of the Pyramids in an elaborate cut-out walnut frame showed a highly poetic sense of the desolation of the Egyptian landscape. The Pyramids were touched in red by the setting sun on their facets to the right, towards their summits, like mountains. The sky was perfectly cloudless and warm in color, red near the horizon, the foreground all brown and empty except where there was a pool. The whole picture was heavily painted with pigments as thick as they could be used. Another work by the same artist, "In the Pontine Marshes," was a curious example of brilliance obtained in white clouds by a dark blue-gray sky behind them. The land was also kept very low in tone to give relief to the white cloud reflections in the marshy pool. These pictures showed great breadth of treatment and a masculine manual power, but they were so meagre in detail (especially the first) as to have the look of enlarged *pochades*.[1]

[1] There is no English equivalent for the word *pochade*. It means a sketch in oil, usually on a thin piece of wood, and small enough to be carried conveniently in the pocket. Such sketches are usually very rough and summary in treatment, and express little more than the broad relations of color in simple masses. They are of great value and utility to painters, but to painters only.

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The best of the Italian painters, by far the best, is unquestionably Pasini; but the most popular is De Nittis. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between his earlier manner, by which he is likely to be more generally known in America, and a manner which he has recently acquired. He first made his fame by strange-looking but clever pictures of sunny Italian subjects, of which just one, the "Route de Brindisi," was exhibited in 1878. The principle of those pictures may be explained in a few words. Bright color and bright light were tried together, often by means of clear blue skies and light-colored dusty roads, with sharp shadows upon them. The figures were cleverly painted with minute attention to fact, and bore a certain resemblance to instantaneous photographs brilliantly colored. The strangeness of these pictures came from a certain quaintness and waywardness of choice, in combination with the greatest keenness of sight. For example, the figures would be oddly placed, setting the usual customs of composition at defiance, but then they would be studied with a strange fidelity; the shadows would be strange in tone and color, and even wrong, but they would be resolutely intended, clearly defined, and really like shadows in strong sunshine by their character. The technical quality of the surface—I mean the actual surface of the picture itself—was also peculiar, and good in its peculiarity. Parts of it were like ivory, parts of it like enamel, but it was never rotten, spongy, or weak. The present manner of the same artist has lost some of its peculiarities and some of its good qualities together. Only the quaintness of style, brightness of color, and conscientiousness of execution are all gone; the artist paints as fast as he can, without any loving finish, and on a much larger scale. Instead of seeking brightness of color and light on their own account, he has come to tolerate the dirtiest possible color and the dullest light for the sake of what he believes to be character. For what he believes to be, I say, and not what really is the essential character of the subjects he now selects. He has taken to painting London, and sees it with Italian eyes; in other words, he sees it with strong exaggeration of its evil atmosphere. When we come from the light of the brilliant

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southern summer to London, with its atmosphere always hazy with coal smoke, we are apt to exaggerate London dinginess in our own minds, simply from the effect of contrast. A painter under such circumstances, faithful to his own mental impression, would paint the London air with a foulness surpassing the reality, or at least select such conditions of it as answer to the common Continental opinion rather than to the general truth. We all know how convinced Frenchmen and Italians are that all England lies buried in a perpetual fog. Such is the strength of imagination, acting in obedience to preconceived ideas, that the slightest haze at Dover seems to them denser than a fog at Calais. They all believe that the sun never shines in London, nor indeed in the whole extent of the British Islands. M. De Nittis has been in London, and has painted it in confirmation of these ideas, with the foulest atmosphere imaginable, not in the least disquieting himself about the extreme ugliness and unpleasantness of the artistic result. Take, for example, his "Cannon Bridge, City," which shows the dirtiness and murkiness of the Thames with unpleasant success, that "muddy impurity" made memorable in the verse of Hood. Besides the filthy river we see the bridge above us like a foul roof under which volumes of ugly smoke are rolling. The artist has a sense of the strange sublimity of the bridge, with its thick columns rising straight out of the bed of the river, and the broad roadway above, like the vast roof of some gigantic temple; but the result as a picture is a hideous top-heavy composition, in which every thing is sacrificed to an impression, and that a disagreeable one. The "Trafalgar Square" and "Bank of England" are full of cold grays relieved only by the colors in the costumes, especially (in the latter picture) the red of two boys of the shoe-black brigade. M. De Nittis has got a very awkward habit of cutting his figures off by the middle—always a great mistake where the ground rises up behind them into the picture.[1] He has avoided this error in his "Piccadilly" to its great advantage. Without its inky atmosphere this picture

[1] When the ground does not rise up into the picture (as in many portraits), the figure or figures may be cut off at half length or three-quarters' length without injury to the work.

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would have been pleasant and successful. The figures, cabs, horses, etc., are all very cleverly introduced and painted with an easy assurance which is the result of knowledge. The "Westminster" is better than the other London pictures if we consider it as a view, the figures being of minor importance here, and consisting chiefly of three navvies leaning on the parapet of the bridge and smoking, whilst a woman and child are coming along the foot-path. The scene consists chiefly of the Houses of Parliament, the Victoria Tower being reflected in the water. Above the building, between the Victoria and Clock towers, the sun is visible over a bank of dense cloud, and there is a breaking in the clouds just at the top of the picture. The weakest element here is the composition, which is as awkward as it can be. The parapet of the bridge cuts off the right-hand corner like the mark you make when you fold down a leaf in a book, and that is all the composition there is; the Palace of Westminster being nothing but a direct representation like a photograph taken on a misty day. The "Bank of England" lacks composition also, but here the defect is hidden by the variety of the figures and vehicles, which amuse and interest the spectator, as they do in the popular English pictures of Frith. Human interest, especially contemporary, and of an everyday kind which any one can recognize, is always a great element of popularity, and makes the general public readily pass over the most glaring artistic defects.

Amongst the younger Italians who are now becoming known, one of the most strongly characteristic of the school is Michetti. I have a hearty dislike to his work in painting, but will endeavor to speak of it with fairness; in etching it is less offensive, because etching is happily achromatic. His best merit is a sort of elegance in the grouping of light and fantastic figures. In color and drawing he belongs, I believe, to the impressionists, a class of artists (Mr. Whistler represents them in England) who endeavor to render, not objects in themselves, but the impression which the objects produce on the retina and on the mind. I believe it is not an injustice to describe these artists as rejecting all the aids of conscious mental effort

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in the analysis of nature,[1] and also as eliminating manual labor so far as it possibly can be eliminated from such an art as painting. The result is a kind of oil sketching, which looks wildly confused at first, but which, after you have examined it for some time, begins to resemble a broken and distorted image of something really seen by the artist in the natural world. The action brought last year by Mr. Whistler against Mr. Ruskin in London has revealed to the public something of an impressionist's manner of working. Mr. Whistler's sketches are done from memory, with extreme rapidity, and are really nothing more than colored memoranda of an impression. For example, suppose you see a scene under a certain effect to-day, and paint it from memory in your studio to-morrow, giving yourself a day to do it in; the result will be a sort of impressionist Whistler picture if you are clever enough to get acceptable relations of color in so short a time. Michetti works much on the same principle, except that he gives more time to his work, and generally proceeds rather by sparkles and dabs than by spaces. "The Kiss" is a rustic scene in Italy where a young peasant is kissing a girl, the only witnesses to the act being some turkeys with red crops. The incident takes place on a sloping hillside, where there are some olive-trees, and a building with a tower. At first you see nothing but dabs of the crudest possible paint; but in course of time the subject will reveal itself to you more or less clearly if you have patience. I can see that Michetti is clever, but I do not call the work *painting* in the high sense of the word as it is understood by serious artists. The other picture by him, "Springtime and Love," is a fanciful picture of girls and youths playing and dancing on green land by the sea with spotty shadows of trees on it; there is also a tree in spring blossom with girls up in it; the whole relieved against a crude blue sky with thin clouds hanging separately. The artist did not find room enough to

[1] The impressionists are really synthetists as opposed to students who proceed by patient analysis, and the desire to record impressions whilst they are perfectly fresh leads them to cultivate the habit of rapidity in execution. It would be uncharitable and unjust to suppose that this rapidity proceeds from indolence or negligence.

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display his eccentricity to its full extent in the picture itself, so it ran over upon the frame, which was as ugly as it was original, bronzed, with a rod projecting from it all round, whilst serpents are twining about the rod and birds sitting upon it. The newest idea in frames is for the painter to daub color upon them accidentally, as it were, with the scrapings of his palette. All these things, I need hardly observe, are really child's play, and nothing else. They are hardly worth notice, but they acquire importance when the cleverest young men in a school of painting are puerile enough to condescend to them.

It was amusing to compare two pictures by Pagliano and Didioni, which represented the same subject—the announcement to Josephine by Napoleon of his intended divorce. Both pictures were vulgar and both exceedingly clever, using and abusing all the technical artifices which produce brilliance. We have had vulgar artists in the English school also who have dedicated their energies to glitter, and who have liked to paint great people with shining satin dresses in splendid interiors. In Didioni's picture Josephine is in her chair, sobbing, and a lady in cheery satin is sympathizing with her. There is an open doorway to the right, through which Napoleon is departing with rapid strides, and his fist clinched behind him shows the sort of humor he is in. All the hangings, looking-glasses, etc., are as fine as possible, and good enough even for a large joint-stock hotel on the day when it is first opened. In Pagliano's picture Napoleon has not yet departed, and is himself endeavoring to do that business of consolation which the other painter has confided to a lady. There is a great deal of clever management of light and shade and reflection in this picture, especially the reflection from Josephine's dress on Napoleon's breeches. He ought not to have trod upon her train, but the moment was exciting, and he was never much of a gentleman.

I have not space to do any justice to Pasini; but cannot leave the Italian school without mentioning him. He was splendidly represented by eleven pictures, all of them remarkable for sound drawing, close observation of character, and masterly handling. The color is satisfactory in nearly all of them, though in one of the best, "Un Faubourg de Constanti-

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nople," it appears crude at first sight, but this is due rather to the variegated subject than to any fault of the artist. All the eleven pictures were taken from Eastern life, which has not a more able illustration in Europe. Pasini is at the same time capable of, much brilliance and perfectly sober-minded. However dazzling his work may occasionally be, it is always serious and thorough.

Some Italian water-colors were remarkably bright and luminous, and I am rather inclined to think that the clever young artists in the Italian school whose work in oil is crude would succeed better in water-color, where their qualities would have a better chance of telling effectually whilst their defects would be less striking. Brightness is always a less dangerous element in water-color than in oil, and crudity less objectionable, whilst a hand naturally skilful becomes more quickly master of the medium.

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON.

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CONTINENTAL PAINTING AT PARIS IN 1878.
PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON
Princeton Review (1878-1884); Jan-Jun 1879; American Periodicals
pg. 489

CONTINENTAL PAINTING AT PARIS IN 1878.[1]

THE most important picture in the whole Exhibition of 1878, if size, abundance of material, great technical power, and a world-wide celebrity are all taken into consideration, was unquestionably Makart's "Entry of Charles V. into Antwerp." There were many works which a private collector would have preferred to this, and many of deeper artistic quality and significance, but there was not one that so predominated by the most striking and obvious kinds of superiority. It was evident at a glance, before the enormous canvas, that the painter was perfectly at home in the showy branch of art which he had adopted. He betrayed none of that timidity and inadequacy which would be very likely to seize upon an artist of finer and more delicate taste, in presence of such a dangerous undertaking, and the result clearly proved that his self-confidence was that of real power, and not the illusion of conceit.

The subject of the picture was suggested by a passage in the diary of Albert Dürer when on his travels. Being at Antwerp at the time when Charles V. made his public entry into the city, Dürer took note of the splendid spectacle, and more particularly of one detail which shocks our modern taste and is certainly much more Greek than Christian in the sentiment which inspired it. In those days on great occasions of triumphal progresses, it was thought the correct thing to exhibit all that was most beautiful in the city, and as nothing is more beautiful than a young and beautiful woman, the worthy burghers actually carried their principles so far as to exhibit handsome

[1] The French and Italian schools of art were discussed by the writer in the March number of this Review. The present article takes up, in order, the Austrian, German, Belgian, and other sections of Continental painting.

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young damsels of the most respectable families, in a state as near to nudity as possible. Such is the power of a custom, that the young ladies were happy and proud to be chosen for these occasions, and instead of being disgraced by this public exhibition, they were raised by it in general esteem, and it increased their chances of making a good marriage. Dürer talked of this afterwards with Melancthon, and said frankly that he had observed these young women, whose forms were admirable, "very attentively and closely, and without shame, because he was a painter;" but Charles V. "cast down his eyes as he passed the fair ones, which, it is said, offended them mightily." I rather apprehend that there is an error, either intentional or involuntary, in Makart's interpretation of the scene. He makes the damsels actually take part in the procession, walking before the king's horse, whereas Dürer's reference to them seems rather to imply that they were to be seen at some point of the route. Makart's arrangement of his subject is rich and magnificent in the extreme, and it is really a fine subject for painting, but (setting aside all our modern notions of decency) there is something uncomfortable in the idea of young ladies walking with naked feet along a paved street close to the hoofs of war-horses, and it offends one's notions of politeness to see gentlemen riding on horseback in rich mantles when ladies are going barefoot, one of them actually carrying a great long sword—the king's sword, I believe. Again, the painter apparently shares with Rubens a love of disorder for its own sake. The procession is badly marshalled; one of the girls is afraid of being trodden down by a standard-bearer's horse, and another is elbowed by a stalwart spearsman. Surely the young ladies must have been better cared for than that!

The artistic qualities of the picture are a striking cleverness in the management of over-abundant material, great skill in manipulation, and a sort of coloring which has every thing in it except refinement. Compared with such color as that of Jean Paul Laurens, this is sufficient and satisfactory, but it differs from the work of true colorists in affording hardly any delicate æsthetic pleasure. The final impression left by the picture, after many visits, was that it would be well suited for the decoration of some great municipal hall where magnificence was

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an object in itself, but not so well suited for a private gallery, where it would be likely in course of time to pall upon the taste of a cultivated and fastidious private owner.

Professor Matejko came next after Makart in the Austrian section. His work is harder in line and more rubicund in color than that of Makart, besides which it has a strong tendency to the sort of ornamentalism which takes pleasure in the details of mediæval costumes. It is a kind of painting very well suited to the illustration of historical subjects, when the subject is of more consequence than the art. We have had several historical painters of this class in England and France, and we know quite well what that kind of painting naturally aims at. Elaborate studies of costume, in striking colors, with plenty of gold, silk, velvet, and embroidery, afford the artist every opportunity for making his pictures splendid. Ah me! how one does weary of all this! Just at first, when the romantic school of painting had established the right to treat a mediæval subject, it was interesting to see what could be got out of costumes which had been proscribed by the severity of classicism, but now we have had any quantity of them, and we know how little permanent power they have upon our minds. The permanent charm and power of painting depend upon its own melodies and harmonies, and not upon the repetition of other arts, such as those of the goldsmith or the embroiderer. These remarks are not intended to imply that Matejko devotes himself entirely to costume, but only that it is too predominant in his work. His heads are finely conceived and strongly painted, though in rather a matter-of-fact manner.

Munkacsy, the Hungarian, is more essentially the artist than either Makart or Matejko. At the risk of repeating what some readers will know already, I will tell, in a few words, the extraordinary story of his life. He was born in 1844 at Munkacs, in the north-east of Hungary, where his father had a small place in a custom-house. During a horrible massacre perpetrated by the Russian troops in the suppression of an insurrection, Munkacsy's family perished, but he was cared for by a poor relation, who put him as apprentice with a joiner who made chests for the peasantry. The lad was set to paint these chests with lively colors; this amused him, and he tried his hand at a

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portrait of his uncle. At Pesth he painted a picture which won a medal at a Paris salon. After very nearly losing his sight from a disease of the eyes, he worked on energetically, and was encouraged by two artists, Than and Ligeti. From Pesth, he migrated to Vienna, wishing to study in the academy there, but he could not pay the charges, and so went to Munich, for cheapness. Here he was well received, and won prizes and money allowances. From Munich, he migrated to Dusseldorf, where he followed the teaching of the Academy in 1868, after which his paintings soon made him celebrated in Paris. Since 1875, Munkacsy has been classed in the first rank of modern celebrities, and the Exhibition of 1878 gave him world-wide fame. It is a long way from the joiner's shop, where Munkacsy painted chests for peasants, to the magnificent studio in Paris, in a fine large house of his own, where he painted "Milton and his Daughters."

The qualities of Munkacsy's style of painting are the result of his way of seeing natural objects, which is essentially that of a painter. I have seen material in his studio and watched his method of interpreting it which did not at all cling to lines as a draughtsman's method would do, but passed from one gleam of light and color to another gleam of light and color with the independence of a humming-bird amongst flowers. Few artists have in a more complete degree the childlike innocence of the eye. He sees things always together, and he always sketches, so that there are never any isolated bits that you could cut out, but all the picture clings together as one whole. Again, he does not care to copy mere ornaments, or indeed to copy any object merely for what it is: he takes the visual result which disengages itself from objects seen together, and paints that. It follows from this method of work that the faces and hands of Munkacsy's figures are apt to seem less well done, relatively, than the accessories, and in all the pictures that I have seen by him, there is something earthy in the complexions. There is also a certain tendency to blackness, which is the more to be regretted that the painter has really the eye of a colorist. Passing from these technical considerations to Munkacsy's rendering of humanity, I should say that his men and women are generally observed with much simplicity and truth. Their

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attitudes are always unconstrained and natural, and there is no attempt on the part of the artist to impose upon us by theatrical affectations. Milton is grave and dignified in the picture (though I am not sure that the once handsome and robust poet really became so wretchedly meagre in his old age), and his daughters attend to him simply, as they probably did in reality. It is remarkable that so quiet a work as this should have attracted so much attention. I may observe, too, that in Munkacsy's other picture, "The Artist's Studio," he refrains, in simple modesty, from giving the public any idea of the real magnificence of his painting-room. His work contains a portrait of the artist showing a picture to a lady in blue, and the lady is his wife.

I have not space to say more about the Austro-Hungarian school, except that it kept up generally to a very high level, which seriously disquieted the French critics and artists. The result of the exhibition in disturbing national self-complacency, was especially visible with regard to the English and Austrian schools, and I never in France have seen such an effect before. I remember something like it in London in 1862, when English artists who did not happen to be familiar with the French school were made rather uncomfortable by the French exhibition, much to their ultimate benefit and advantage. I have no doubt that the effect of the Austrian and English exhibitions on French artists will be equally wholesome. It is much, already, that they should have lost their national self-conceit, and begun to perceive that they are not the only clever fellows in the world.

Not only Austria, but even Germany, hostile Germany, was well, though not very numerously, represented, and entirely by cabinet pictures, there being no room to hang vast historical compositions in the single hall reserved for the German school. That hall was one of the most agreeable and most interesting in the *Champs de Mars*, and French visitors heartily appreciated it.

It is hardly necessary to say that Knaus made everybody laugh by his extraordinary faculty of remembering and painting an expression, with the most vivid truth.[1] His picture of "A

[1] An American artist, Mr. J. B. Brown, painter of "The Passing Show," has the same gift also in an extraordinary degree. I do not mean to say that he is such a thorough artist as Knaus, but it is much to deserve mention in such company.

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Promising Pupil " represented the interior of a Jewish old-clothes dealer's back shop, he sitting in an arm-chair smoking a long German pipe, whilst the boy is sitting opposite on a plain stool. The boy is listening eagerly to the keen Jew's advice and taking it all in with the most lively intelligence ; he, too, will win money—honestly?—that depends on circumstances, but you may be sure he will win money. The man seems to say, " Now, is not that a clever dodge?" and the boy is delighted to feel himself able to appreciate such admirable astuteness. Now it is as easy as lying to write this down in words, but what must be the genius of the painter who can express it all in painting just as plainly as if he could make the people speak? For this particular talent Knaus has not his equal in the whole world. There was another picture by him in the German room, representing the same Jewish boy, but this time alone. This subject was called " Une Bonne Affaire "—a good stroke of business. The boy is putting a piece of silver into his purse, the produce of his cleverness, with a surprising expression of delight. His present line of business is the rabbit-skin trade, but we may safely predict that in course of time he will rise to higher things. What a step from " Milton and his Daughters" and " The Entry of Charles V." to this! Here, precisely, is the glory of Art—that its field of labor is wide as the world itself, that the splendid royal pageant, the grave interior inhabited by august genius and misfortune, and the glee of an ill-dressed young dealer in rabbit-skins, are all alike subjects worthy of a great painter's skill and talent.

After Knaus I suppose the best known German painter is Kaulbach. He is not so essentially himself as Knaus—I mean that his art is not so directly an expression of his own observation of nature. A third person always seems, in Kaulbach's works, to come between, but it is not always the same third person ; sometimes it is the reminiscence of one predecessor, and sometimes of another, not that you can always precisely name the predecessor, but you perceive an influence. For example, the " Lady with her Son" is distinctly archaic, an imitation of early German painting in manner, but perfectly serious, and rich in fine technical quality.. The explanation seems to be that Kaulbach throws himself so completely into the

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spirit of the time he represents, as to become almost an artist of that time. Here the lady is mediæval, and so is the painting—better of course than painting was or could be in the real middle ages, yet animated by its quaint spirit. The subject is a lady of rank with her boy; she wears a coronet and a formal head-dress, and is relieved against a flat piece of drapery with straight edges, leaving a space of picture on each side for a glimpse of landscape where you see a castle and river. The boy holds a great sword in a crimson sheath. All this is treated exactly as a mediæval artist would have treated it if he could have painted with such skill, but when you turn to the "Rêverie," by the same painter, you get into another region of art altogether. Here a lady in white satin is sitting in a magnificent apartment tuning her lute. She is dressed in white satin, and we all know the kind of art suggested by a lady in white satin with a lute. She carries us at once to Holland and Flanders, where she has been a standard subject from Terburg and Metzu down to Stevens and Willems. In the present instance, Kaulbach, who was a mediævalist in the preceding picture, becomes a modern rival of the Terburgs and Metzus, and at once invites comparison with their successors. By his delicate transparent painting of figure, dress, and background, each in its own place, Kaulbach is technically on a level with the very ablest modern artists in the same style.

There were so many clever pictures in the German section that it is difficult to do more than mention a few of them. Nothing could be livelier or better in its way than Gierymski's "Hunt in the Eighteenth Century," which belongs to the Berlin National Gallery. The huntsmen are all in a blue costume, and are dashing brilliantly through a coppice with all the gayety and animation which distinguished lordly hunting in those days. The painter was so perfectly at home in his subject, so completely master of his material, that our feeling of enjoyment was not interfered with by any sense of technical difficulty, and painting itself seemed as merry a business as riding a well-trained horse. A good picture by Diez, of Munich, was "His Excellency *en voyage*," representing a great lord in his coach, passing through a wretched hamlet, the date being some time in the *siècle de Louis XIV.* The contrast be-

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tween the pride of an ostentatious aristocracy and the wretchedness of a miserable peasantry, could not have been more effectively suggested. In the present day an "Excellency" travels with less display and through more prosperous populations. Bockelmann's picture of "A Bank Failure" brings us to some of the less pleasing realities of our own time. Depositors are crowding about the door only to learn their loss, and of course the painter does not fail to let us fully perceive the individual misery caused by these too frequent disasters. Unfortunately, as often happens when Art illustrates moral and social questions, its own exigencies and necessities are lost sight of, and the spectator, though his moral feelings are touched and his sympathies awakened, is not likely to receive any æsthetic gratification from the composition or coloring of the picture. I believe it may be accepted as a principle, that moral and social interests in painting are generally dangerous to artistic interests, and that a lady in white satin, idling with a guitar in a well-furnished room, is always likely to be better painted than an illustration of modern political economy or morals. It is not forbidden to painters to touch the heart, and one of the great advantages of figure-painting is that it can do so with so much effect. E. Hildebrandt, of Carlsruhe, had a very touching picture of a dying child, with her father and mother by the bedside, stricken with awe and sorrow. The scene was imagined with quiet truth and no affectation of any kind. You had only to stay a few minutes before the picture, to feel the interior of that peasant's cottage becoming painfully real. Another touching picture was by Petersen, of Munich; it merely represented the interior of a pew at church with two girls and an old woman between them, the old woman with clasped hands praying earnestly. A picture of an exactly opposite character was "A Conversation," by Werner, of Berlin, in which five royal guards dressed in a glaring and absurd old fashion, were talking to two maid-servants over a rail, the whole party being wonderfully merry. This picture greatly amused the general public on days when the exhibition was crowded, and so did Meisel's picture "At the Convent," an apparently very truthful study of monks who had over-eaten themselves. This appears to be rather a prevalent vice of

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theirs if painters' "tales are true, nor wrong those holy men." Whatever the truth may be, it is certain that artists have a strong tendency to represent monks, when they represent them at all, like fatted swine which have gorged themselves into a state of somnolent stupidity, and the satire never fails to amuse the public, who do not stop to ask themselves how far it may be deserved. C. Gussow, of Berlin, had a popular success with clever imitative pictures, the portrait of an old lady, the interior of a studio with an old woman in it, occupied in dusting a plaster reduction of the *Venus de Milo*, and the interior of a picture-gallery where an old man is alone with the pictures. The degree of imitative skill attained in these works was remarkable, but ability of this kind is seldom associated with eminent artistic gifts of taste or imagination.

Some German artists possess a gift which has always appeared to me one of the most enviable—that of reducing the natural complexity of landscape to a simple yet satisfactory expression. People are very apt to undervalue this because the result looks easy, and has the appearance of having cost but little labor; yet if they knew how difficult it is to simplify nature well, they would appreciate a power which makes the human interpreter less the slave of detail and more free to seek the expression of the higher sentiments. One of the most satisfactory examples of this kind of painting was "On the Baltic Shore," by E. Dücker, of Dusseldorf, a very simple and apparently straightforward piece of work. A red evening sun shows through a dark bank of slaty cloud, and this with a gray piece of sea (what Morris would call "waters wan"), a sandy shore, and a little green vegetation with a few trees, produced an effect of dreariness not much enlivened by a few figures, but dreary or not, the spirit of the scene was there. A view of Scheveningen by A. Achenbach, with the full moon rising over red roofs and sandy dunes, had many of the same qualities, though perhaps with less striking simplicity of method. Munthe, of Dusseldorf, now a very famous painter of winter effects, exhibited a single picture, "A Winter Landscape," of course. Here, again, it is not so much the amount of labor given as the judgment with which it is applied that makes the result satisfactory. Truth of impression is the dominant qual-

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ity of this artist's work, and a very great quality it is. His powers of composition and invention do not appear to be extraordinary, but his materials are arranged with taste. His mind has been so completely imbued with the appearances of the wintry landscape, that it reproduces them with striking veracity; and it is this veracity which has made the painter so famous. It is a pity, though, that his customers should tie him down (as I know they do) so exclusively to winter subjects. He paints other seasons of the year equally well, but sells them with some difficulty, whereas his winter scenes are always in demand. Another Dusseldorf man, C. Kröner, paints winter with striking truth; his "Wild Boars in Snow" was a remarkable picture, which conveyed the impression so completely, that the spectator felt himself in the dreary forest, and at the same time the boars were thoroughly well studied as animals in motion. Passing from winter to summer, I may mention P. Meyerheim's picture called "The Descent, near Bozen." The subject is a peasant coming down a very rough mountain road, with oxen. This was an interesting example of certain qualities and defects which are not unfrequently found together in modern art. The painter had evidently studied with great industry, and he could remember attitudes well, yet his picture failed from want of æsthetic charm, and then comes the question why were we not charmed by it? The answer is that the attempt to render very bright and clear sunshine is rarely pleasant, however successful; the result is apt to be inharmonious, hard, and cut up with numbers of little broken lights and shadows, as in this picture by Meyerheim. Unfortunately, in this instance, the material chosen very much aided this broken effect, so that there was no repose anywhere, yet the artist had plenty of technical skill, and certainly knowledge enough for work of a higher order. The most recently successful artists, such as Munthe, for instance, aim at more tranquillity, which is one of their greatest merits. One of the best of them, A. Lier, of Munich, exhibited a picture called "Autumn Evening on the Banks of the Isar," which belongs to the Berlin National Gallery, a beautiful landscape with water flowing over a weir and trees reflected in it, with a glowing evening sky. An excellent picture of wet weather, exhibited by H. Baisch, of Munich, represented "A Highroad in Holland," almost as watery as the canal in the

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same scene. Landscape painting of good quality appears to take root of itself in certain localities very unaccountably from time to time, and often in the most unpromising places. Dusseldorf has been known for a long time as a nursery of German landscape, and of late years Munich is also known in the same way. In England we have had the Norwich school, and quite lately the London critics are beginning to speak with respect of a Manchester school of landscape painting. These little schools generally have their origin in the influence of one man, or else in the influence of a beautiful place, such as the forest of Fontainebleau or Bettws-y-Coed. Sometimes the very ugliness of a place drives men to paint beautiful landscape by mere reaction. Manchester produces landscape painters by its very disagreeableness, and I believe Munich is by no means rich in pleasant scenery.

In the Belgian exhibition one of the most conspicuous contributors was Charles Verlat, of Antwerp, who exhibited fifteen pictures, several of them of great size. The large canvas entitled "We will have Barabbas," forced itself upon public attention by an abundance—a superabundance—of vulgar power which could not be resisted, notwithstanding all the protests of the artistic judgment within us. Barabbas is carried away in triumph on a man's shoulders, surrounded by the coarse Jewish populace in high glee, every man of them as large as life, and so real that it is like seeing the men themselves in the glaring sunshine of Jerusalem, with the dust sticking to them and the shine of the perspiration on their skins. Whilst these wretches are dancing and grinning and kicking up their dusty heels, the face of Christ looks down upon them sadly, and Pilate is quitting the scene. To the right of the picture, the multitude are holding out their hands and pointing at Jesus, to the left they are more occupied with the man they can understand, their Barabbas. The *profanum vulgus* is realized here with terrible power, but unluckily the picture is vulgar as well as the beings it represents. A painter who gives himself up to realize with the utmost force the shine of perspiring skins and the appearance of dust clinging to the lower parts of the body, has lost that reticence which invariably marks elevation of artistic taste. It may be answered that there are passages in Shakespeare quite as coarse, and this is too true; yet a modern reader does

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not admire Shakespeare for these passages, but in spite of them. Just so with M. Verlat: we admire his dramatic power, but we deprecate his coarseness.

This coarseness is less offensive in another large picture by the same artist, "The Defender of the Herd"—a buffalo fighting with a lion. The scene is a great arid African landscape, desolate to the utmost possible degree. We have a glimpse of a blue-green lake in the distance, with sandy, treeless shores and reddish mountains beyond. Strong, sharp shadows are cast everywhere, and yet the painter, from the want of good color, produces no feeling of sunshine. The foreground and middle distance are occupied by sandy hillocks, over which buffaloes are galloping, whilst one of them turns aside to punish a lion which he has thrown on his back and is goring terribly. The scene is impressive from its perfect unity of conception and power of realization, but it is oppressive at the same time, and unpleasant. It is difficult to understand in what kind of room such a picture could be permanently welcome. Possibly some African hunter, like Gordon Cumming or Sir Samuel Baker, might hang it in his hall along with other barbarous memorials of Africa; or more appropriately still, it might be useful to the keeper of a wild beast show as a sign and advertisement. It is remarkable that the same painter in his "Mother of the Messiah" entirely lays aside his coarseness both of conception and of technical work, being at once elevated by his subject to a much higher and serener region of thought.

Like Verlat, A. Stevens exhibited fifteen pictures. His manner of work and choice of subject are so perfectly well known that it is unnecessary to dwell upon them. The best of his contributions to the Paris Exhibition seemed to me to be his portrait of a boy, M. Emmanuel Crabbe, by far the most distinguished-looking portrait in that part of the exhibition, as elegant as a Van Dyck, yet modern, and colored, not richly but with great taste, in a contrast of pale-brown and blue-gray—brown in dress, oak floor, hat, and dog, and blue-gray in gloves and curtain. The young face was very life-like, with rather a wondering expression, the figure most gentlemanly.

Other pictures by the same artist showed his usual cleverness in the arrangement of female figures with their shawls and dresses, all of course very ably painted, but without any especial

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interest. Wauters, the historical painter, had three pictures of importance: "The Madness of Hugh Van der Goes," "Mary of Burgundy Imploring the Aldermen of Ghent to Pardon her Counsellors Hugonet and Humbercourt," and "Mary of Burgundy Swearing to Respect the Communal Privileges of Brussels." All these pictures had the same substantial qualities, being clearly conceived and firmly painted throughout, with little or no display of dexterities, yet always adequate skill. It is a satisfaction to see an artist making a reputation by good sound historical painting, because that form of art has been in some danger of a possible extinction, and it has its uses when founded upon sufficient data. Painters like M. Wauters really help us to imagine the past. The present runs no risk of being neglected, even in its most transient fashions. The Japanese craze, which reached, I hope, its zenith in the admiration for the ridiculous little bamboo inclosure at the Trocadéro called the "Japanese Farm," was prettily illustrated in a picture by F. Verhas, called "La Robe Japonaise." A young Belgian or French lady is dressing another in a Japanese costume, a subject arranged entirely on the principles of Toulmouche—that is, a clever bringing together of pretty girls and pretty things, but remarkable amongst pictures of its class for the great beauty of the painting, every thing being so thoroughly well done. The accessories in pictures of this kind are in fact studies of still-life, but where an old Dutchman contented himself with common household furniture and utensils, the modern Frenchman or Belgian chooses the most elegant things he can find, and associates them with the strictest regard to their effect upon each other, either in color or form. This is more the exercise of good taste than any really elevated art, but when it is well done, the result is pleasing, and I do not see that it does any harm to anybody, though it excites the anger of some artists and critics.

A kind of art more in harmony with the preferences of the present writer is that of Hippolyte Boulenger, the landscape-painter, who died in 1875, at the age of thirty-six. His father was an officer in the Belgian army, whose premature death left a young family with very little provision. How young Boulenger managed to study in his early years is one of those mysteries which often astonish us in struggling and difficult lives,

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but he both studied for his own advancement and helped his relations, designing costumes and lace, and doing, no matter what, to earn a little money. His favorite place of study was Tervueren, not merely in the royal park, but in the surrounding country, which he explored thoroughly. He called himself, for fun, a pupil of the school of Tervueren, the only school there being that of nature; but he got permission to use a loft over an empty stable as a studio, and painted there happily enough, whilst he hunted about the neighborhood for subjects. He became famous in his own country at the Brussels *salon* of 1872, when three important landscapes gave him a pre-eminent position amongst Belgian landscape-painters and won him a gold medal. Since then he has become known in France, and M. Tardieu wrote an interesting article about him in *L'Art* (1875). He was represented in the Paris Exhibition by five landscapes, of which my space only allows me to mention one, the view of Dinant. This picture is sketchy in style, but beautifully arranged and well colored in a cold key. The sky is entirely a play of white and pleasant grays, warm and cool, with little openings of blue. On your left is a mass of rocky cliff crowned with fortifications, and in the middle and farther distance are lower cliffs and hills. The middle of the foreground is occupied by the river with a raft upon it, and then you have the houses, quay wall, church-spire, etc., the whole keeping very well together, and painted quite in the spirit of a genuine artist, who sees things in his own personal way. The premature death of this painter is a serious loss to the Belgian school. I was very much pleased with the one picture exhibited by J. Quinaux, of Brussels, "A Ford on the Lesse." The Lesse, where M. Quinaux found the material for his picture, is a stream running over a stony bed under a high wooded bank, very like the stream scenery in some parts of Yorkshire or the Lowlands of Scotland. There was nothing extraordinary in the river, but the style of painting was broad and powerful, yet not without elegance, in the lighter tree forms, the color rather sombre, but true and just, especially in the relation between color and light-and-shade, so often neglected by painters.

Clays is so celebrated for his boat subjects that it is scarcely necessary to do more than mention them, especially as they have always the same qualities. His style of painting is not so

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delicate as that of the old Dutch masters, nor is it so perfect in quality of tone, but it is much richer and more satisfying to a modern taste, being much more varied than the old Dutch work, both in color and execution. I may mention "Leaving the Basin, Antwerp," as one of the best examples of the master, both for strength of effect, and a pleasant appearance of ease. The sky is lightly brushed in grays and pale-blues, cold and warm grays playing together in the clouds; the principal vessels are a Dutch barge and a brig, the utmost advantage being taken of the coloring of the sails, white, umberish, or red. It is interesting when we are acquainted with the craft of art, to see how the masters make use of its resources. The brilliancy of this picture by Clays, depends on a narrow fold of a hanging sail which turns to the light and catches it brilliantly, apparently of course in the most accidental manner. Amongst marine subjects by other artists, I noticed one by T. Weber, "Low Tide at Ostende," a quiet picture of tumbling brown sea, quite true in color and in drawing of wave. This picture had the excellent quality of being well seen at some distance. Mr. Beernaert's "Village of Domburg, Zealand," was a very truthful and simple piece of painting in many respects, but wanting in light, though the scene was in full sunshine. It was composed of commonplace but not inartistic materials, a rough sandy foreground, houses with red roofs in the middle distance, and a church-spire slated at the top, then a few trees and a cloudy sky. Continental painters of several different nations have got into a way of painting these village landscapes in a manner which is not unpleasing and shows some genuine love for nature, yet does not awaken any vivid interest in the spectator. Amongst Belgian artists who have attracted some attention of late, may be mentioned Marie Collart, who produces original pictures in a very decided manner, selecting for her subjects quiet familiar little corners, such as a bit of an orchard, or a mill with cows, or a glimpse of an old road. Madame Collart has a certain charm of quaintness, and, though the expression may seem contradictory, is at the same time original and old-fashioned. It is both a quality and a defect in her work that it has such an appearance of finality. She knows so exactly what she has to do, and does it so completely, that we wonder she does not seem to suspect any possibilities beyond. All her pic-

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tures seem as if they had been produced according to a set receipt. This appearance of finality is, I think, more common in Belgium than either in France or England. For example, there is Bossuet, who has been painting warm evening light on picturesque cities for the last twenty years, and paints it still precisely in the same manner; Stevens, Clays, and Willems have not moved, mentally, out of the same circles of ideas since they first became known beyond the limits of their own country. The one versatile man is Verlat, but in him the motive-power is rude energy, and not the love of perfection.

There is a very strong prejudice in the public mind that an amateur has no chance of becoming an artist, but when you know the private history of artists you discover from time to time that the transition has been accomplished. There are instances of this in France and England, but one of the most remarkable of recent instances has occurred in the Netherlands. H. W. Mesdag, of the Hague, was an unknown amateur a few years ago, who amused himself by painting street scenes. By a happy inspiration it occurred to him that he would try to paint the sea-shore, and as he saw the waves with his own eyes, and not through the eyes of any other painter, he soon produced works which had all the force of a strong personal impression. For several years past his pictures have been amongst the most noted at the Paris salons where the artists especially took an interest in them. They are remarkable for great vigor of style and freshness of effect, qualities which are due to the strength of the impression received by the artist himself from nature, and to his courage in expressing himself at any cost, looking simply to the result and never caring about trifles. It may be objected to Mesdag's works that they are only large sketches, but there is, I think, a distinction to be observed between sketches which are large, and enlarged copies of small sketches. Whatever may be the processes used by Mesdag, his pictures never look as if they were mere enlargements, as so many French landscapes do. His long picture called "Levée de l'ancre," gives a powerful impression of the sea-shore on a windy day. You have the wet beach with the water swilling and swirling over it, the tumbling sea, tossing boat, and active, fearless men. The line of horizon is high, and the horizon itself long and monotonous; above it the clouds are rainy, but there is some fresh blue sky, and sea-

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gulls are blown about in the wind. To have such a picture as this is like having a window close to the sea-shore without the wearisome noise of the waves. Two other pictures by the same artist represented a life-boat going to the assistance of an English crew shipwrecked at Scheveningen, and the same boat returning. The principal object of these works is to convey the general aspect and impression of such a scene to the spectator, the result of this singleness of aim being perfect unity. You are in the boisterous weather, interested in the life-boat, and oblivious for the moment of all the vanities of art.

This determined adherence to truth and unity of impression is the distinguishing merit of the best Dutch artists of the present day. Take James Maris, for example, and see how completely each of his pictures keeps to its own simple purpose! "On the Beach" represents simply a fishing-boat on the sand —not much of a subject; indeed, many critics would say that it was enough for a sketch, but not enough for a picture, and the canvas is rather large. Nevertheless, the spectator is not conscious of any insufficiency of material, and he is soon interested in the varieties of quiet color and satisfied by the learned execution. The picture as a whole is gray and silvery, painted almost entirely in *impasto*. Variety of color is got out of the coloring of the boat itself, with its red sails and a little green paint on the top of the stern-post for contrast.

Apol, of the Hague, exhibited a picture called "Landscape near a Dutch Town," from which I should infer that he is what in France is called an "impressionist," but he is a favorable specimen. The impressionists are a new sect, composed, as all new sects in painting invariably are, of young men who have not yet definitively formed their styles. The principle of their work is not in itself either inartistic or unphilosophical, considered as an interpretation of nature, but it involves the sacrifice of very much which has hitherto helped to make the strength of art. They go to nature and receive an impression (whence the title they give themselves), and the purpose of their art is to render the impression as a whole without either the painful study of parts or any scientific arrangement of material. I fully understand their theory, and have some sympathy with it as an honestly conceived idea, but it seems more applicable to rapid sketching from nature than to pictures on a rather im-

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portant scale. In my view Mesdag goes as far towards impressionism as is really safe. The ultra-impressionists forget that people look at pictures very much at leisure, and that art must be deliberate to bear deliberate examination. Again, they confine their looking at nature to sudden impressions, because they desire to produce on the spectator that single-stroke effect which he would receive from a sudden sight of nature. The consequence of these principles is that "impressionist" pictures are never carefully thought out, and that the vanguard of the school rather despises artistic arrangements, just as the pre-Raphaelites in England used to despise the well-known and much hackneyed forms of compositions. Sects like these, when founded upon principles held sincerely, always bring a certain freshness into art, and are so far productive of good.

To return to Mr. Apol and his "Landscape near a Dutch Town." A brown-gray river ripples under a pale-brown-gray sky, and you have boats, steamers, sailing vessels, windmills, mills with long chimneys, and some old houses on the shore. The picture in point of color is little more than a harmony of browns and grays relieved by dark reds and a little pale-blue; the style that of the most comprehensive sketching, which tries to indicate every thing so that the spectator may get a summary of the whole. The criticism which prevailed twenty years ago would have called such a work "unfinished," but in these days we are more accustomed to the varieties of artistic expression, and may accept it simply for what it is—a work in which the incompleteness of parts is systematic and intentional, with a view to pictorial unity.

W. Roelofs exhibited a "View near Abconde," which belongs to a society having for its object the formation of a public gallery at Amsterdam, to be filled entirely with modern pictures. The subject was a river scene, with nothing peculiarly Dutch about it; indeed, such themes exist abundantly in French landscape. The river was not navigable, only a rather broad stream with trees on its banks and plenty of reeds and aquatic vegetation spreading on its surface and catching the sunshine. The merit of the picture lay in the artist's determined rendering of appearances instead of objects, which is the great secret of good landscape-painting. The aquatic vegetation presented

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itself to the eye, chiefly as a space of intense light upon the water, as it often does under strong sunshine.

Leslie told me a story about the Duke of Wellington which I found afterwards in his autobiography as follows: "When I had sketched his figure I asked him to look at it. He said, 'You have made my head too large, and this is what all the painters have done to whom I have sat. Painters are not aware how very small a part of the human figure the head is. Titian was the only painter who understood this, and by making his heads small he did wonders.'" The great Duke was not much of a critic, but his criticism, though quite inapplicable to most painters, would have been very just with regard to one modern Dutchman, David Bles, of the Hague. His pictures are not without wit and intelligence, but all the heads are monstrously large in proportion to the bodies. The fault is more intelligible and natural than the opposite one of making them too small, since the head, as the seat of intelligence, naturally takes upon itself a degree of predominance out of proportion to its real size, so that there is a temptation to draw it larger than it really is.[1]

The most interesting figure-picture in the Dutch exhibition was certainly C. Van Haanen's "Bead-threaders at Venice." A number of girls are at work threading beads under the presidence of a stout elderly matron. The qualities of the picture were striking, and in very different ways. It was full of human interest, to begin with, and of real sympathy with life; the figures were not lay-figures, but living human beings; industrious, yet not at all painfully oppressed by labor. Besides this human interest the picture had much artistic interest, for its clever grouping, well-observed or well-invented attitudes, and cunning though complicated arrangements of color, the various hues of dresses, beads, etc., being admirably dealt with—contrasted here, harmonized there, and every thing taken advantage of, either for its chromatic brilliance or its quietness. Mr. Van Haanen seems to have retained many of the good substantial qualities of modern Dutch painting, and to have added to them some modern Italian brilliance, which is not in his case pushed to the point of crudity.

[1] For an analogous reason all landscape-painters, without exception, draw the orbs of the sun and moon with enormous exaggeration of their real proportionate size in the heavens as measured in seconds of arc.

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Josef Israels, who is now as well known in England as if he were an Englishman, exhibited four pictures, three of which are the property of British collectors. It is probable that he is well known in America, so that I need not dwell upon that remarkable sympathy with real poverty which is the strong point of his art. His color is not what is generally called crude, but it is unfortunately not really good color, being compounded of tints which may be "subdued," but are not particularly agreeable or harmonious. At the same time it must be admitted that Israels avoids the glaring errors of bad colorists.[1]

Baron G. O. Cederström, of Paris (who is easily confounded with Baron T. Cederström, of Munich), had the most important picture in the Swedish exhibition, "Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, Killed before Frederikshald in Norway, crosses the Frontier, borne by his Guard." This picture was bought by the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia, and was one of the greatest successes of the year. It is a very sober and serious work, as may be expected from the subject, the power of it consisting in a vigorous manliness both of conception and execution. The temper of the painter seems to be in perfect harmony with that of some high-minded military officer, and the consequence is a dignity which impresses every one. Under a gloomy sky, along a dreary mountain road, amongst inhospitable rocks, in the depth of winter, the royal guards march sadly homewards, bearing the body of their world-renowned sovereign and general. A hunter has met the mournful procession and stands aside with his hat off to let it pass, whilst his dog howls in obscure canine wretchedness as the grave and silent bearers go their way. It would be difficult to imagine any form of historical painting more satisfactory than this. The subject is sufficiently near to our own time for all important matters of detail to be ascertainable, and the painter has that perfect sympathy with his subject which belongs to nationality alone.

[1] It has sometimes been a subject of regret that painters who have not naturally the gift of color should work in color at all. Why not paint in simple monochrome? The answer is that all opaque monochromes are chromatically disagreeable, especially when in course of execution, and that transparent monochromes are inadequate to the complete expression of a painter, even if we do not take color into consideration. Oil painters are thus driven to color by a technical necessity, even when there is no natural gift, and the consequence is, of course, that many artists work in color who have neither the pleasure nor the power of a colorist.

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Sweden is rather cast into the shade by the more famous countries of the world, but she has had her Charles the Twelfth, and now she has a painter worthy to celebrate her hero.

Wahlberg, the Swedish landscape-painter, principally known for his moonlights, had several important pictures. Two of the best were a "Moonlight at Waxholm, Sweden," and "An August Night at Winga, near Goetembourg, Sweden." Moonlights have never been satisfactorily painted until our own time. Painters used to consider moonlight inevitably cold in color, though in nature it is often very warm; and they made it hard and vacant, when in nature it is generally soft and full of mystery. Wahlberg's color is not absolutely faultless; his skies have sometimes a dangerous tendency to a dirty brown, and his style of painting when he attempts sylvan landscape in daylight, is somewhat woolly and confused; nevertheless he is probably the best painter of moonlight who ever lived, and it is something to possess such a specialty. The quality of his work is simply to make you feel the same impression which you get on a fine, but not cloudless moonlight night at some rather quaint and quiet little harbor on the sea-coast. The "Waxholm" is a good specimen. It is a little fishing harbor, with rocky rising ground and a windmill, whilst nearer the level of the water you have houses, bridges, and a little jetty, with boats. The moon is in a sky with dark clouds and serene spaces, and the water glistens as all of us have seen it glisten under the magic light which makes the dullest pool poetic.

Munthe exhibited with the Germans by right of his residence in Dusseldorf, and again with the Norwegians by right of birth. In the Norwegian gallery his principal work was an intensely dreary fishing village under a dim sky with a struggling moon, snow on the ground, of course, and wan water with wavelets lapping the shore. The material consisted of four houses, shelters for nets, barrels, boats, and figures, but all these things were kept subservient to the intended effect of dreariness. It is one of the most astonishing things in human nature that people should be willing to give hundreds of pounds for scenes which are the reverse of cheerful; but sad pictures, like sad poems, awaken in the mind emotions of melancholy which are not without their charm.

The Norwegian school was rather strong in landscape.

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"Midnight at Lofoten," by A. Normann, represented some precipitous mountains close to the sea, with snow in their hollows. The mountain forms were admirably drawn—I mean that the drawing displayed very thorough knowledge of structure, though it may or may not have been accurate as to portraiture; the color was not very agreeable, but may have been true, the whole scene reddened by the midnight sun. Another picture by the same artist, "A Fiord in Norway," was striking as an illustration of what is most characteristic in Norwegian scenery. Great masses of rocky precipice rose from the fiord, leaving only a little space of level ground, on which a few houses could nestle—houses communicating with the world by water only. High above the precipice were rocky peaks with snow in their hollows. All this material was treated with evident enjoyment of mountain forms and effects, as well as that pride and delight in the visible beauty or grandeur of the native land which is the right sort of patriotism for a landscape-painter. A much quieter scene by S. Jacobsen represented a path through a wood in winter, and displayed real power over the commoner aspects of nature, being equal, as a representation of sylvan scenery, to the better works of the French and German schools.

Limits of space, already exceeded, compel me here to bring these observations to a close, notwithstanding many omissions, the most important of which are the Spanish and Russian schools, both of considerable present importance and likely to become still more important in the future. It is useless to mention pictures without dwelling upon them long enough to give the reader some interest in their subjects and some explanation of their qualities; but this, if it be done in such a way as to make an article at all readable, occupies a great deal of room, so that not many works can be mentioned. To do any justice to the vastness of the exhibition in the *Champs de Mars*, a critic would require at least a volume for each of the greater schools, and it would not have been possible, whilst the exhibition lasted, for one man to get through such an amount of work. The critic who toiled too much would injure his powers of enjoyment—the most necessary of all his qualifications.

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